

II. Remarks

Claims 1-12 are pending in this application. Claims 1-12 stand rejected. The present amendment amends claims 1 and 3 to more particularly point out and clarify Applicants' invention. No new matter has been added by the present amendment. Reconsideration of the application in view of the following amendments and remarks is respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,471,817 issued to Baker ("Baker"). The rejection of claims 1-12 are traversed.

Applicants' have amended claim 1 to further recite that the method of packaging an airbag comprises the steps of folding the airbag into a roll having a cylindrical form. The cylindrical form has a radial center therethrough that defines a longitudinal axis of the roll. The roll is deformed around at least one member to form at least a region of the roll having a substantially "C" shape positioned parallel to the longitudinal axis of the roll. The deformed roll is packaged such that the substantially "C" shape is retained. Support for this amendment may be found in paragraphs [0022], [0023] and [0026] and figures 2, 3, 6, 10 and 11 of Applicants' application.

Baker discloses an automatic system 10 for folding a vehicle airbag 63. The machine 10 has a holding fixture 18 for receiving the airbag 63. The machine 10 includes a plurality of upright members 14. A flattened bag 63 is supported above the upright members 14, and sequentially inserted between

the upright members 14 forming undulating folds. The upright members 14 are removed from the airbag 63 while the airbag 63 retains the undulating folds. The folds are then compressed, forming a compact package. *Baker* at abstract. The machine 10 also includes a rotary assembly 24 which has substantially horizontal arms 34 and 35 extending forwardly. *Id* at col. 6, lines 55-65. The rotating arms 34 and 35 rotate the folded compact package clockwise so that a portion of the airbag 63 rolls around the folds. *Id* at col. 9, lines 20-25. The folded and rolled airbag 63 is then sandwiched between vertical members 48 and 49 and compressed inwardly along arrowed lines R and S to flatten the folded and rolled airbag. *Id* at col. 9, lines 43-50. Thus, the method of folding an airbag disclosed in *Baker* comprises forming folds in a flattened airbag 63 about upright members 14. The upright members 14 are subsequently removed and the folded airbag is then rolled and deformed to a flattened shape by being compressed between two vertical members 48 and 49 to provide an airbag with a small profile.

This is unlike Applicants' invention as recited in amended claim 1 where the method of packaging the airbag comprises folding the airbag into a roll having a cylindrical form that defines a longitudinal axis and then deforming the roll around at least one member to form at least a region of the roll having a substantially "C" shape positioned parallel to the longitudinal axis. In that *Baker* lacks the noted element of claim 1, the rejection based thereon should be withdrawn. Accordingly, Applicants' believe claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-12 are in a condition for allowance.

The Examiner posits that *Baker* discloses that the airbag roll is deformed by urging a pair of vertical walls 48 and 49 into contact with the

exterior of the roll such that the roll includes a plurality of "C" shaped regions. Office Action at page 2. This is however neither the language of claim 1 nor what Baker discloses. The folds in the airbag 63 are formed in a flattened airbag 63 about upright members 14. Moreover, the rolled airbag is neither deformed around either one of the vertical walls 48 and 49 nor deformed by the vertical walls 48 and 49 to form a substantially "C" shape. Accordingly, the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-12 is improper and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1-12.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present form of the claims are patentably distinguishable over the art of record and that this application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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